

CENSUSES BEFORE 1900

In the censuses from 1790 to 1900, very little mention was made—in the published report tables, accompanying textual materials, or instructions to census takers—of Americans living overseas or on ships at sea. The 1830 and 1840 censuses were the only censuses in this time period that published separate population counts for overseas components; these were for crews of naval vessels at sea. Otherwise, too few U.S. citizens lived overseas for an extended period to warrant special procedures to enumerate them and, operationally, it probably would not have been feasible to do so, given the systems of communications then in existence.

The **1830 census** was the first to make reference to any segment of the population that would later be considered part of the U.S. overseas population. Basic census tabulations included a separate data line of 5,318 for the “whole number of persons employed on board public ships in the service of the United States on the 1st day of June 1830 [Census Day for the 1830 census], not credited to any division or State.” These persons were not allocated to any region or State or included in the population for purposes of calculating congressional apportionment.

Likewise, the **1840 census** tabulations also included a separate data line of 6,100 for “seamen in the U.S. naval service, not distributed among the States.” These persons also were not allocated to any region or State or included in the population for purposes of calculating congressional apportionment. The 1830 and 1840 figures were defined in an 1850 census report as “persons on board vessels of war in the United States naval service.” No documentation was found that explained how the 1830 and 1840 counts were obtained.

The **1850 census** marked the first time that the instructions contained residence rules that pertained to persons abroad or at sea. The relevant portion of the instructions

for filling out the principal stateside 1850 population schedule—provided to marshals and their assistants who were responsible for conducting the census then—was the following:

The assistants in all seaports will apply at the proper office for lists of all persons on a voyage at sea, and register all citizens of the United States who have not been registered as belonging to some family.

Thus, the assistant marshals were to examine lists of persons at sea at the appropriate offices in every port and register the U.S. citizens among them. No documentation was found that described the special registration the assistant marshals were to conduct or how the assistant marshals determined who had already been registered at their stateside home. An 1850 census report stated that “Americans resident abroad should be ascertained through the State Department” but did not elaborate as to whether any overseas counts were ever obtained or whether they were included in any tabulations.

No mention was made in the **1860 census** of Americans living abroad or on ships at sea. The only reference to these population groups in the **1870, 1880, and 1890 censuses** was in the instructions for filling out the respective stateside population schedules.

References relating to the overseas population in the instructions to assistant marshals in 1870 and enumerators in 1880 were as follows:

Seafaring men are to be reported at their land homes, no matter how long they may have been absent, if they are supposed to be still alive.

Relevant portions of the enumerator instructions in 1890 read:

All sailors and marines stationed on vessels...will be specially enumerated and need not be taken by the district enumerator if, upon inquiry or by notification, he knows that such special provision has been made.

1900 CENSUS

The U.S. population abroad reported in the 1900 census was 91,219. As of June 1, 1900, this figure comprised—

- U.S. military personnel at military and naval stations abroad and their dependents, including officers' servants, living with them.
- Federal civilian employees at military and naval stations abroad and their dependents living with them.
- U.S. naval personnel and Federal civilian employees on naval vessels abroad or at sea and officers' servants.

These persons were not allocated to any region or State or included in the population for purposes of calculating congressional apportionment.

Americans abroad or at sea were enumerated on regular population schedules used stateside. That is, overseas military and naval personnel were enumerated on Schedule No. 1, Population—"Military and Naval Population." This form was a 4-page booklet, with 50 person lines on each page. Overseas military dependents, Federal civilian employees attached to military units abroad, and their overseas dependents were listed on Schedule No. 1, Population, "Civilians, Residents of the United States at Military or Naval Stations." This form was a listing sheet printed on both sides with 50 person lines on each side.

Americans abroad were enumerated through the cooperation of the War and Navy Departments. Generally, a military member on the naval vessel or attached to each unit on the overseas military or naval station served as enumerator and filled in the forms.

The geographic distribution of the 1900 overseas population is given in table 4. As this table shows, the Philippines were the principal location of Americans abroad. The rationale for including Americans abroad was stated in the census volume as

...except for conditions arising out of the Spanish-American War, they would have been found residing largely within the limits of the United States proper, and they are, therefore, included properly in the total for 1900 for purposes of comparison with the population returned at preceding censuses.

No formal definition of "living abroad" was included in the 1900 census reports; however, living abroad can be inferred as residing in the countries listed in table 4 or on naval vessels.

Enumerator Instructions

References relating to the overseas population in the enumerator instructions for the principal stateside popula-

Table 4. **Americans Overseas at Military and Naval Stations: 1900**

Location of station	Total	Officers and enlisted men	Civilian employees, etc. ¹
Total	91 219	87 538	3 681
Naval vessels	14 701	14 305	396
Cuba	11 048	9 666	1 382
Guam	147	147	—
Philippines	62 095	60 883	1 212
Puerto Rico	3 201	2 537	664
Tutuila [American Samoa]	27	—	27

Source: Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900, Volume I, Part 1, Population, table II.

¹As the text in the 1900 report noted, the 396 civilians on naval vessels included boys and other persons (not officers or enlisted men) on vessels loaned to certain States for use as school ships, and on vessels under the control of other departments of the U.S. Government but operated by officers and enlisted men detailed by the Navy Department. The other 3,285 persons in this column included not only civilian employees of the U.S. Government but family members of certain officers, enlisted men, and civilian employees; and officers' servants.

tion schedule were the following:

If a soldier, sailor, or marine (officer or enlisted man), or civilian employee in the service of the United States at a station at home or abroad, is a member of a family living in your district, he should be enumerated as a member of that family, even though he may be absent on duty at the time of the enumeration.

There was no documentation in the 1900 census reports that clarified whether overseas persons counted at their stateside residence, in accordance with the enumerator instructions above, were included in the overseas count (91,219) reported in this census. Thus, the possibility exists that some Americans overseas may have been counted twice: once in the overseas count and again at the stateside home.

**7-413, Schedule No. 1—Population
Military and Naval Population
(Left)**

TWE

Name of Military or Naval Station, or Vessel:

State

Country

Seaport

	NAME of each person whose place of abode on June 1, 1900, was at the above station or aboard the above ship. Enter surname first, then the given name and middle initial, if any. INCLUDE every person living on June 1, 1900.	RANK, GRADE, OR CLASS.	RESIDENCE IN THE UN	
			CITY OR TOWN.	STATE.
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7-413.

Enumerated by me on the _____ day of June, 1900.

1900 CENSUS 13

**7-224, Schedule No. 1—Population
Civilians, Residents of the United States, At Military or Naval Stations
(Left)**

TWELFTH CENS

SCHEDULE

CIVILIANS, RESIDENTS OF TH

Name of military or naval station or vessel, _____

Country _____

State _____

County _____

Township or other division of county _____

[Insert name of township, town, precinct, district, or other civil division, as the case may be. S

Name of incorporated city, town, or village, within the above-named division, _____

Enumerated by me on the _____ day of June

LOCATION.				NAME of each person whose place of abode on June 1, 1900, was in this family. Enter surname first, then the given name and middle initial, if any. INCLUDE every person living on June 1, 1900. OMIT children born since June 1, 1900.	RELATION. Relationship of each person to the head of the family.	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION.							
IN CITIES.			Color or race.			Sex.	DATE OF BIRTH.		Age at last birthday.	Whether single, married, widowed, or divorced.	Number of years married.	Mother of how many children.	Number of these children living.
Street.	House Number.	Number of dwelling- house, in the order of visitation.					Month.	Year.					
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7-224.

wn, precinct, district, or other civil division, as the case may be. See instructions.] _____ *Name of Institution,* _____

by me on the _____ day of June, 1900, _____, Enumer

[illegible]

1910 CENSUS

The U.S. population abroad reported in the 1910 census was 55,608. As of April 15, 1910, this figure comprised—

- U.S. military personnel at military and naval stations abroad and their dependents, including officers' servants, living with them.
- Federal civilian employees at military and naval stations abroad and their dependents living with them.
- U.S. naval personnel and Federal civilian employees on naval vessels abroad or at sea and officers' servants.

These persons were not allocated to any region or State or included in the population for purposes of calculating congressional apportionment.

Americans abroad or at sea were enumerated on the principal population schedule used stateside. This form was a listing sheet printed on both sides with 50 person lines on each side.

Americans abroad were enumerated through the cooperation of the War and Navy Departments. Generally, a military member on the naval vessel or attached to each unit on the overseas military or naval station served as enumerator and filled in the forms.

"Living abroad" was defined in the 1910 census reports as living "beyond the limits of the United States proper and outside the outlying possessions included in the area of enumeration in 1910" (Puerto Rico and the territories of Alaska and Hawaii).

Enumerator Instructions

References relating to the overseas population in the *Instructions to Enumerators* for the principal stateside population schedule were the following:

Sailors on merchant ships—Sailors on voyages are to be reported at their land homes, no matter how long they have been absent, if they are supposed to be still alive.

Soldiers, sailors, marines, and civilian employees of the United States—In order to avoid duplication, soldiers, sailors, and marines belonging to the army or navy of the United States, and civilian employees of the United States, are treated as resident at their posts of duty or places where they are regularly employed. If, therefore, any family in your district reports that one of its members is a soldier, sailor, marine, or civilian employee of the United States with a post of duty or station elsewhere, you should *not* report him as a member of that family.

The 1910 census was the first in which enumerators were instructed *not* to report Federal employees (military and civilian) at their stateside home but rather at their post of duty. Federal employees overseas were not mentioned specifically.

Citizens abroad—Any citizen of the United States who is a member of a family living in your district, but abroad temporarily at the time of the enumeration, should be enumerated as of your district. It does not matter how long the absence abroad is continued, provided the person intends to return to the United States.

There was no documentation in the 1910 census reports that clarified whether overseas persons counted at their stateside residence, in accordance with the enumerator instructions above, were included in the overseas count (55,608) reported in this census. Thus, the possibility exists that some Americans overseas may have been counted twice: once in the overseas count and again at the stateside home.

Population Schedule (Left)

STATE _____ }
COUNTY _____ }

THIRTEENTH

TOWNSHIP OR OTHER DIVISION OF COUNTY _____

[Insert proper name and, also, name of class, as township, town, precinct, district, hundred

NAME OF INSTITUTION _____

[Insert name of institution, if any, and indicate the lines on which the entries are made. See inst

LOCATION.				NAME of each person whose place of abode on April 15, 1910, was in this family. Enter surname first, then the given name and middle initial, if any. Include every person living on April 15, 1910. Omit children born since April 15, 1910.	RELATION. Relationship of this person to the head of the family.	PERSONAL DESCRI				
Street, avenue, road, etc.	House number (in cities or towns).	Number of dwelling house in order of visitation.	Number of family in order of visitation.			Sex.	Color or race.	Age at last birthday.	Whether single, married, widowed, or divorced.	Number of years of present marriage.
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Population Schedule (Right)

S
POPULATION

{ SUPERVISOR'S DISTRICT NO.
{ ENUMERATION DISTRICT NO.

{ SHEET NO.

A

WARD OF CITY

, as city, village, town, or borough. See instructions.

DAY OF

, 1910.

, ENUMERATOR.

OCCUPATION.					EDUCATION.			OWNERSHIP OF HOME.				Whether a survivor of the Union or Confederate Army or Navy.			Whether blind (both eyes).		Whether deaf and dumb.
Task, en.	Trade or profession of, or particular kind of work done by this person, as spinner, salesman, laborer, etc.	General nature of industry, business, or establishment in which this person works, as cotton mill, dry goods store, farm, etc.	Whether an employer, employee, or working on own account.	If an employee		Whether able to read.	Whether able to write.	Attended school any time since September 1, 1909.	Owned or rented.	Owned free or mortgaged.	Farm or house.	Number of farm schedule.	Whether a survivor of the Union or Confederate Army or Navy.	Whether blind (both eyes).	Whether deaf and dumb.		
				Whether out of work on April 15, 1910.	Number of weeks out of work during year 1909.												
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32		
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1920 CENSUS

The U.S. population abroad reported in the 1920 census was 117,238. As of January 1, 1920, this figure comprised—

- U.S. military personnel at military and naval stations abroad and their dependents living with them.
- U.S. naval personnel on naval vessels abroad or in American waters, but not on fixed station.
- persons abroad in the service of the American Red Cross or in the U.S. consular service and their dependents, including servants, living with them.

These persons were not allocated to any region or State. No apportionment was made after the 1920 census, the apportionment of 1910 remaining in effect.

The 1920 census marked the first time the Census Bureau used a special population schedule for enumerating Americans overseas. This form, titled "Military and Naval Population, Etc., Abroad," was identical in size and content with the principal stateside schedule except for a simplified occupation inquiry and additional requests for rank and U.S. address of each person enumerated. This form was a listing sheet printed on both sides with 50 person lines on each side. Generally, a military member on the naval vessel or attached to each unit on the overseas military or naval station served as enumerator and filled in the forms. No documentation was found that described how the forms were distributed, collected, or processed.

"Living abroad" was not defined in the 1920 census reports.

Enumerator Instructions

References relating to the overseas population in the *Instructions to Enumerators* for the principal stateside population schedule were the following:

Sailors on merchant ships—Sailors on voyages are to be reported at their land homes, no matter how long they have been absent, if they are supposed to be still alive.

Soldiers, sailors, marines, and civilian employees of the United States.—In order to avoid duplication, soldiers, sailors, and marines belonging to the Army or Navy of the United States, and civilian employees of the United States, are treated as resident at their posts of duty or places where they are regularly employed. If, therefore, any family in your district reports that one of its members is a soldier, sailor, marine, or civilian employee of the United States with a post of duty or station elsewhere, *you should not report him as a member of that family.*

Citizens abroad—Any citizen of the United States who is a member of a family living in your district, but abroad temporarily at the time of the enumeration, should be enumerated as of your district. It does not matter how long the absence abroad is continued, provided the person intends to return to the United States.

There was no documentation in the 1920 census reports that clarified whether overseas persons counted at their stateside residence, in accordance with the enumerator instructions above, were included in the overseas count (117,238) reported in this census. Thus, the possibility exists that some Americans overseas may have been counted twice: once in the overseas count and again at the stateside home.

D7-686, Military and Naval Population, Etc., Abroad (Left)

NAME OF MILITARY OR NAVAL STATION, OR VESSEL: _____

9-349

COUNTRY _____

SEAPORT _____

DE

FOURTEENTH

	NAME of each person whose place of abode on January 1, 1920, was at the above station or aboard the above ship. Enter surname first, then the given name and middle initial, if any. Include every person living on January 1, 1920. Omit children born since January 1, 1920.	RANK OR RELATION. Give rank of officer or enlisted man. Give relationship of civil- ian person to head of family.	RESIDENCE IN THE UNITED STATES.		
			State.	City or town.	Street and number.
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE—BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
FOURTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1920—POPULATION
 MILITARY AND NAVAL POPULATION, ETC., ABROAD

ENUMERATED BY ME ON THE _____ DAY OF _____ 1920.

[illegible]

D7-686, Military and Naval Population, Etc., Abroad (Right)

(D7-686)

POPULATION

COMPANY OR TROOP

REGIMENT

ARM OF SERVICE

SHEET NO.

A

..... 1920.
..... ENUMERATOR.

NATIVITY AND MOTHER TONGUE.				Whether able to speak English.	OCCUPATION.	
FATHER.		MOTHER.				Trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as soldier, sailor, marine, servant, carpenter, etc.
Place of birth.	Mother tongue.	Place of birth.	Mother tongue.			
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